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SUBJECT: RENAMO LEADER ALFONSO DHLAKAMA'S CONCERNS ENTERING  
THE ELECTIONS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Todd Chapman, Reasons 1.4(b+d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Charge spoke October 27 by phone with Renamo Presidential Candidate Alfonso Dhlakama. Queried about his concerns entering election day, Dhlakama noted the importance of the political party representatives who provide the onsite monitoring of the voting sites. He relayed that many times opposition delegates note irregularities to the President of the voting table, but the official table representatives are all from the Frelimo party, therefore the irregularities are not corrected. When the opposition party monitors become insistent, the President of the voting table calls in the police to take away the party monitors. Dhlakama also alleges that Frelimo voting table members take the ink blots and add extraneous marks to ballot papers registered for the opposition, thus voiding these ballot papers. The situation most to be feared, he said, was the perception that the opposition was heading to a victory and the Frelimo loyalists begin changing the results--such a scenario would invite chaos and violence in which the police might begin firing their weapons. END SUMMARY.

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DHLAKAMA VOICES CONCERNS FOR ELECTION DAY  
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¶2. (C) The Charge spoke October 27 by phone with Renamo Presidential Candidate Alfonso Dhlakama and congratulated him on running a spirited campaign. Queried about his concerns entering election day, Dhlakama noted the importance of the political party representatives who provide the onsite monitoring of the voting sites. He relayed that many times opposition delegates note irregularities to the President of the voting table, but the official table representatives are all from the Frelimo party, therefore the irregularities are not corrected. When the opposition party monitors become insistent, the President of the voting table calls in the police to take away the party monitors. Dhlakama also highlighted the importance of the physical voting of the ballots, alleging that Frelimo voting table members take the ink blots and add extraneous marks to ballot papers registered for the opposition, thus voiding these ballot papers.

¶3. (C) Dhlakama continued that the Presidents of the voting tables will delay the posting of the voting lists in order to delay the certainty with which voters have about the exact location where they should vote. Whereas the CNE is supposed to be responsible for all phases of the vote count, Dhlakama stated that the GRM's STAE (the Government organization for administering elections) in fact does much of the work, and they are all Frelimo supporters. "I have been saying this since 1994--political parties need to be present within STAE."

¶4. (C) Dhlakama was confident that Renamo would do well in the national assembly elections and maintain a sizeable

block. When asked about his prospects in the presidential race and the possibility of a second round, he chuckled and said "Of course, we are in Africa. If I were in Europe or America, with the kind of democracy you have, then I would say we'd win." He said that given the enthusiasm of the crowds at his rallies, it was clear that the will of the Mozambican people was for a change in leadership in Mozambique. "But in poor Africa," he continued, "the winners are the losers and the losers are the winners." The situation most to be feared, he said, was the perception that the opposition was heading to a victory and the Frelimo loyalists begin changing the results--such a scenario would invite chaos and violence in which the police might begin firing their weapons.

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COMMENT: DHLAKAMA'S RETURN  
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15. (C) One of the surprises in this election was the unanticipated return of Dhlakama to a more active role in Mozambican politics. Moribund for more than two years, some say by an abuse of alcohol, the threat of losing all of Renamo to Daviz Simango, who split away to form MDM, coupled with the presidential campaign itself seemed to energize him. While MDM has captured much of the urban youth vote, Dhlakama appears still popular among the rural areas of the center and north, his traditional political base. Dhlakama said in a public speech recently that this would be his last presidential election, but at age 56 and given his renewed activism, few believe him.  
CHAPMAN